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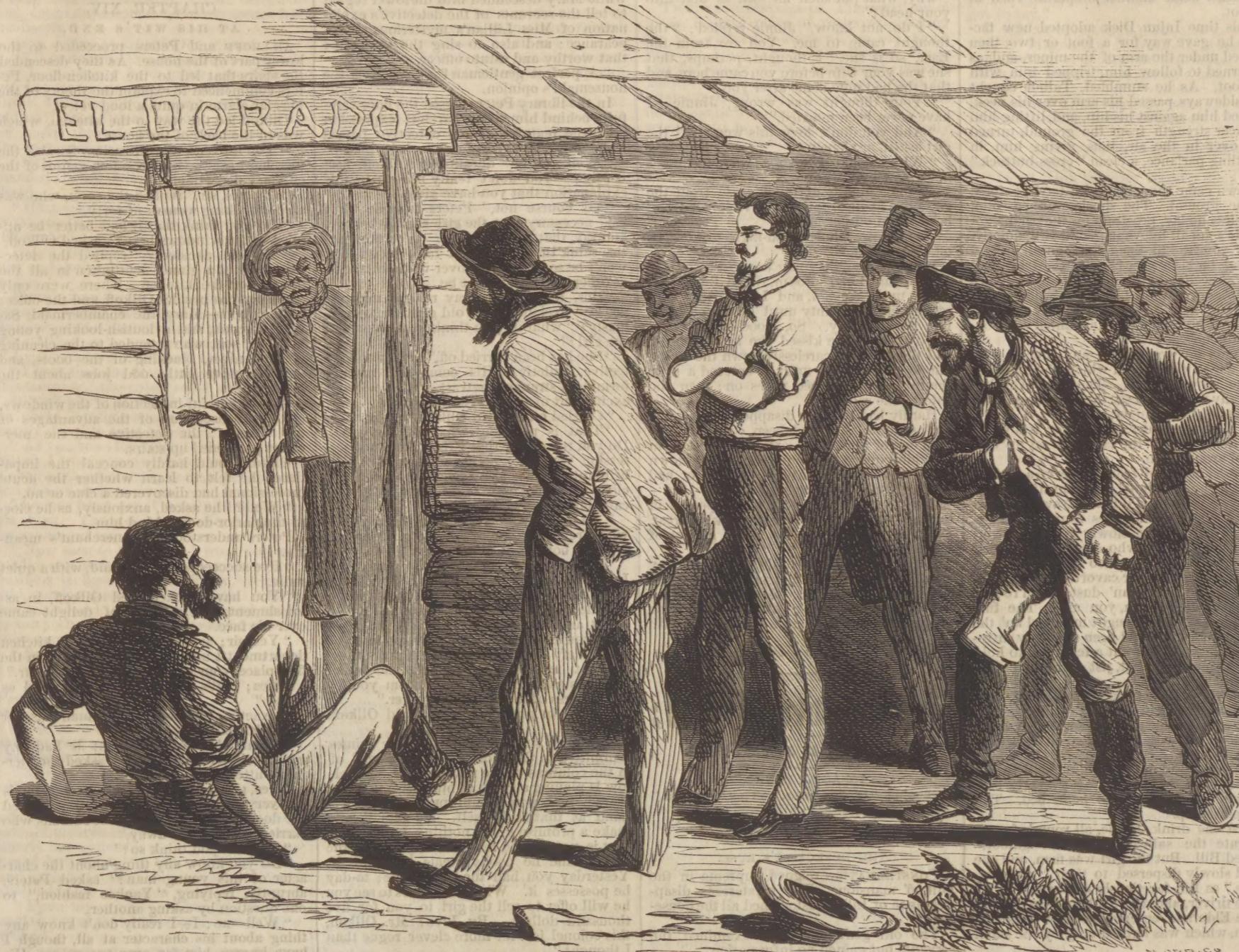
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"Reckon I'd better travel," said Dandy Jim. "You've got too many airthquakes round hyer fur me."

OVERLAND KIT; OR, THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

Author of "Witches of New York," "Wolf Demon," "White Witch," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAN FROM RED DOG.

"What's the matter, Dick?" asked the girl, anxiously.

"Oh, nothing; only a little nervous attack, that's all," he replied, recovering himself with a great effort.

Talbot sat silent facing the door, while Jinnie had her back to it, so that she had not noticed the entrance of the stranger.

"Good-evenin', Miss Jinnie," said Bill, the driver advancing to the girl. Mr. Rennet and Bernice followed; both of them had seen so many strange sights in their western journey, that they were not much surprised when Bill introduced Jinnie as the hotel owner.

"I'll do the best I can for you, Miss," said Jinnie, politely, when she learned that it was the intention of the strangers to remain with her for a week or so. "But, we're pretty well crowded; we hain't got many rooms, but I reckon I'll be able to fix you, somehow."

"You can have my room, Jinnie," Talbot said; his head down, resting on his arms, which were laid upon the table, and thus hiding his features from view.

Bernice and the old lawyer looked at Talbot in astonishment, his appearance was so different from the rest of the inmates of the saloon.

"But, where will you go, Dick?" asked Jinnie, anxiously.

"Oh, anywhere; I'll get along well enough," Dick replied, never raising his head from the table.

"I am very much obliged to you, sir," Bernice said, in the low, sweet, lady-like voice, that was such a contrast to the clear, ringing tones of Jinnie.

Talbot shivered when the tones of Bernice's voice fell on his ears, as though an icy wind, fresh from the north, had blown full upon him.

"This way, Miss; I'll show you to your room at once; and you, sir," said Jinnie, addressing the old lawyer, "I'll have to put you in the room with Bill, here. It's the best I can do."

"You'll be as snug as a pint of bourbon in a miner's gutlet, old hoss!" Bill exclaimed, slapping Rennet familiarly on the back, with his huge paw. "Say, I hope you allers keep your own side of the bed, 'cos when I bunks in with strangers, I allers goes to bed with spurs on."

After Jinnie and the two strangers left the saloon, Talbot raised his head and looked around him. His face was pale as the face of the dead; great drops of sweat stood like orient pearls upon his white forehead, which the broad-brimmed slouch hat had protected from the hot sun-kiss, that had bronzed the rest of his face. A strange expression was upon his usually calm features. What had so excited Injun Dick, who had been known to face a dozen angry men, with brandishing weapons in their hands, with a smile upon his lip and a biting taunt upon his tongue?

"I must get out of this" he murmured, restlessly; "the mountain canon and the shelter of the pines must be my home till this woman is far from here! How beautiful she is. For the sake of a woman like her, I'd walk barefoot over burning coals;

With a quick step, but a calm face, Talbot strode forward and confronted the Red-Dogite.

"See here, my friend, you had better go

but I must fly from her. I feel that she will bring me ill-luck; I must get out—leaving!"

Talbot arose from his seat and approached the bar.

"Give me some whisky," he said.

The Chinaman handed down the bottle in astonishment. He had never known Talbot to call for raw spirits before.

Dick filled a glass brimming full and drank it off as if it had been so much water.

"The liquor seems to have lost its strength," he murmured, an ugly look at the eyes. "How much, then?"

"Six bitee," replied Ah Ling.

Talbot tossed the money upon the counter and turned to leave the saloon. He longed for the fresh air, laden with the balm of the pine, swept from the white peaks down along the river valley.

"Injun Dick!" Bernice passed by Bill, following Jinnie, she said, quickly:

"What is the name of that gentleman in black?" indicating Talbot, as she spoke.

"Indian Dick!" Bernice exclaimed, in amazement at the strange appellation.

"Yes, sirree! Injun Dick Talbot. He's the big shanghae round thishere."

Without further words, Bernice left the room, following Jinnie and the old lawyer. She had taken a sudden and strange interest in the stranger, whose voice alone she had heard; whose face she had not seen.

Bernice found that the room assigned to her was in the front of the building and looked out upon the only street of which Spur City could boast.

It was small, plainly-furnished, but fitted up neatly and tastily. A woman's hand, though, was plainly evident in the simple adornments.

In the silence of the little room, Bernice pondered first on the man who bore the strange name of "Injun Dick," and then upon the masked horsemen who had pronounced her name at the first glance.

"Something tells me that here in this place I shall find what I seek," she murmured, as she prepared to disrobe for bed.

Hardly had she commenced to undress, when a terrible series of yells, coming from the saloon below, fell upon her ears. She paused to listen.

"I'm the—man—from—Red—Dog, hic, wake snakes an' come at me! yar-who-oop!" and he indulged in a prolonged yell.

It was the drunken yell of the representative from Red Dog that had disturbed Bernice in her chamber above.

After delivering his defiance, the stranger looked around him.

The inmates of the saloon naturally glanced toward Talbot, who stood leaning on the bar, an evil look in his eyes; he understood to whom the defiance was directed, but made no reply.

"Who's the man called Injun Dick—the feifer that wears kid gloves an' store clothes?" howled the stranger. "Let him step out an' look at me! I kin frighten him into a grease-spot!"

"My name is Dandy Jim from Red Dog!"

Then the stranger executed a war-dance in the center of the saloon.

"Set 'em up, agin'! Come an' see me! Yar-who-oop!" Again the stranger yelled with all the strength of his powerful lungs.

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Losing his balance, the stage-driver sprawled over on the flat of his back, like a gigantic frog.

The girl raised the head of the fallen man from the ground and supported it on her knee. With pale features, lips tightly compressed and eyes shooting lurid fires, Jimmie looked into Talbot's face. She tore open the band of the shirt that seemed to compress the swollen neck.

"Get me some whisky, quick, some of you!" she cried. The crowd had discreetly fallen back a little after the girl's appearance. There was something terrible in her grief that impressed even the rude miners with awe.

Two or three of the crowd ran into the saloon after the whisky.

Jimmie bent over the pale face; her long hair had escaped from the knot that usually held it in place and came down like a red screen around the shapely head of Talbot. Concealed by the tangled mass of hair that half hid her action from the gaze of the wondering crowd, Jimmie kissed the pale lips of the senseless man with a dozen or more eager, burning kisses, as though she thought the fire of her lips would woo him back to life.

She thought not of those that stood around her; she would have done the same had all the world witnessed the action.

The color came back to the pale lips; the passionate kisses had accomplished their object; Talbot was reviving.

The girl raised her tearless eyes—there was too much fire in her soul for tears—joyfully to heaven. Her eyes rested on the pale face of Bernice, pressed against the glass. Had not Bernice been clad in her night-dress, robed for rest, she too would have sprung as eagerly as the other to the assistance of the fallen man.

With the quick instinct of woman, Bernice had guessed what had taken place, when the red-gold hair of Jimmie had swept, screen-like, around the face of Talbot. She could hear the eager kisses wooing life into the cold lips, though they reached no other ears. That little minute was an hour of torture to the soul of Bernice.

The eyes of the two girls met.

A single glance; but a glance of hatred met and returned.

"She loves him too!"

Four unspoken words, flashing through two brains at the same moment; from that moment Bernice Gwyne, the woman who seeks, and Jimmie, the girl who runs the Eldorado saloon, knew that they were bitter enemies.

With a roar and a howl, the three miners rushed from the saloon with a bottle of whisky, to which the Heathen Chinee, Ah Ling, clung with the courage of desperation.

"Melican man, no have—payee, alle same!" he screamed, in remonstrance.

When the three rough fellows had rushed into the saloon and seized the first bottle that came handy, and prepared to depart with it, the faithful "Chinee" had battled manfully with the thieves as he supposed the intruders to be as they hadn't tendered payment for the whisky or given any explanation.

"All right, Heathen," said Jimmie, taking the liquor. There was a strange, unnatural tone in the girl's voice. A forced calmness that seemed to tell of a raging fire within; something like the thin crust that covers the volcano's flame.

The Chinaman retreated into the saloon again, smiling blandly.

Jimmie poured the whisky into the hollow of her hand and dashed it upon the head that lay on her knee.

The smell of the potent spirits finished what the kisses of the girl had begun. Strange medicines, the pure and dewy lips of the girl and the fiery incense of the soul-destroying liquor.

Slowly Talbot opened his eyes and looked around him, with a wondering gaze.

"Be a man, Dick," murmured Jimmie, reproachfully, in his ear. "You have fainted like a girl."

"You don't know the cause," he answered, a shiver shaking his form as though icy fingers had touched him.

"Yes, I do!" Jimmie exclaimed. "I am not blind, Dick; it is this woman—this stranger from the East."

There was just a little touch of reproach in the girl's voice.

"Come now, git on your pegs!" cried the red-shirted miner, who began to bluster again, thinking from Talbot's sudden illness that he had an easy job before him. "Stand up an' take your gruel like a man. I kin hug a b'ar to death, I kin. I'm the cavortin' grizly from Red Dog, who-oo-op!"

"Say, Dick, lemme peel the hide off this ring-tailed mule!" cried Ginger Bill, who had risen to his feet after being pushed over by Jimmie's impetuous rush, and stood quietly by, looking on.

"No, no!" replied Talbot, rising to his feet, his strength having apparently all returned to him. "I ask no man to fight my battles. This fellow wants a lesson; he shall have one. Jimmie, go in; this is no place for you;" but, even as he spoke in a chiding tone, he pressed the brown hand of the girl within his own, softly.

The pressure brought the quick, tell-tale blood to the cheeks and forehead of the girl; her eyes, too, flashed with a joyous light.

Without a word, she quitted his side, and went toward the saloon.

A single glance she gave at the pale face that still was pressed against the window-glass above. Upon her features was a look of defiance of triumph. Bernice answered it with scornful, contemptuous glances.

Rivals for one man's love were now those two girls, who, but an hour before, had never seen each other.

CHAPTER VI.

TWO LOVES FOR ONE HEART.

A deep silence reigned among the rough crowd as Talbot stepped forward and confronted the giant.

The contrast between the two was great; not that there was such a difference between them in size, for now that the miner had doffed his high-crowned hat, and bared his arms, he did not appear to be a great deal larger in frame than his opponent—only taller. His arms were larger, but the bulk came from pounds of useless flesh, not from sinew and muscle.

A pugilist would have looked with admiration upon the easy and graceful posture of Injun Dick, as he carelessly threw himself into position and faced the miner.

It was the old story over again; brute strength against cultivated skill.

A desperate rush the miner made at his opponent. His brawny arms cut the air as blow succeeded blow, but their force was wasted upon empty space. Agile and grace-

ful as a dancing-master, Dick either stepped back out of reach, or warded off the blows, as the rock throws aside the breaking wave.

Out of breath, the giant paused.

"Putty man you are, ain't ye? Why don't you stand still and lemme hit you? You wuss nor a perate dog!" growled the miner, breathlessly.

Without replying, Talbot measured the distance, and sent out his right arm, as if intending to strike the giant on the breast. Clumsily the miner dropped his arm to ward off the blow, when, quick as a flash, rap tap! the knuckles of Talbot left their marks on the face of his opponent; then Dick jumped back again, out of distance, and putting down his hands, laughed at the bewilderment of the astonished giant.

"How's that for high?" suggested one of the crowd.

"This is as good as a circus!" roared Bill, in huge delight. "Get any more fellows like you in Red Dog?"

Maddened by the taunt, as well as by the smart of the three cuts in his face, which did not improve his personal beauty at all, the miner made another desperate rush at Talbot.

This time Injun Dick adopted new tactics; he gave way for a foot or two, then dodged under the arm of the miner, and, as he turned to follow him, tripped him with his foot. As he stumbled, Talbot caught him sideways, passed his arm over his neck, pressed him against his hip, and, lifting him by sheer strength from the ground, turned him over in the air, thus giving him, in wrestling parlance, a clean "cross-buttock" fall.

Down came the giant with terrible force to the ground. The shock stunned him. Senseless he lay, prostrate on the earth.

"He's got all he wants," said Bill, quietly.

"If your kilt, open your mouth an' say so, bad luck to yeess!" cried the Irishman, Patsy, kneeling by the miner.

"He's only stunned," Talbot said, coolly, unrolling the sleeves of his shirt. "I'll be over it in a minute. He wanted a lesson, and now he's got it."

"Guess we won't want any more," Bill said, with a chuckle, in which the majority of the crowd joined. The Spur-Cityites naturally rejoiced to see their townsmen get the best of the stranger.

In a few minutes, the miner recovered from the effects of the fall. He sat up and looked around him.

"Gosh! my head feels bigger'n a bushel basket!" he ejaculated, in a mystified sort of way. "Reckon I'd better travel; you've got too many ariquakes round here for me." Then he rose slowly to his feet and approached Talbot, who stood with folded arms. "Stranger, yer too much fur me. I axes yore pardon fur cavitin' round hyer, an' I'll jist git up an' dust. You're just lightning' b'il'd down, you are!" The first time you hit me, I thought my head an' the hind leg of a mule had been suddenly introduced. If you ever want a fell'r fur to hold your hat in a free fight, jist call on me; I'm your antelope!"

Then the miner picked up his hat, and started off up the street.

The crowd made a break for the door of the saloon, but were confronted on the threshold by Jimmie.

"No more Eldorado to night, gentlemen," the girl said, decidedly. "It's nearly one, and time for everybody to be in bed. The bar's closed up."

"Just one drink, Jimmie, all round, fur to celebrate the salivatin' of that galoot," pleaded Bill. But the girl was firm, and the crowd slowly dispersed to their "roosting-places" as Bill facetiously observed.

The driver, and a few others who roamed in the Eldorado, entered the now darkened saloon, which was lighted only by one small lamp.

Talbot, who had put on his hat and coat, remained outside, leaning against the door-post, apparently buried in thought.

Jimmie waited until all the idlers had dispersed; then she approached Talbot.

"What is the matter with you, Dick?" she asked, in a low, soothing voice; "you seem like a man in a dream."

Talbot started, roused from his abstraction by the girl's question.

"I—I am 'not well,'" he said, slowly, a painful restraint evident in his manner.

"And it is all the fault of this strange woman; she has bewitched you, Dick."

"Perhaps she has," he replied.

"I know she has!" Jimmie cried, earnestly.

"It was her presence that made you act so strangely in the saloon. It was the sight of her face in the window above that made you, the strong, resolute man, faint like a weak woman when you looked upon it. Why should this person possess such a strange influence over you?" And as she asked the question, a sudden and fearful suspicion shot across her mind. A thought that made her clenched teeth in agony, and catch her breath as though life were about to desert her. But Talbot, his thoughts far away, his eyes fixed in a vacant stare, afar off, where the dark line of the pines cut the mountain peaks, whitened by the moonbeams, did not notice the agitation of the girl. He did not even hear the words that she addressed to him.

"Dick!" she cried, impulsively, pulling him by the coat-sleeve, "will you answer me?"

"What is to be done?"

"Temporize—promise every thing and give nothing?" replied Peters, coolly.

"We must meet this fellow at his own game, and use his weapons."

"But, how in heaven's name could he manage to carry off the girl? Surely she would not have gone with him of her own free will."

"No," replied Peters, quickly; "the last time I was here, she promised me that she would not leave this house. She gave me her word, and she meant to keep it, sir; no fear of that. She never left this house of her own free will."

"I believe it!" cried Ollkoff, emphatically.

"Don't spare money to aid you in discovering her, Mr. Peters; call on me for all you want. I love the girl as if she were my own child."

"I'll find her, sir; don't fear as to that!"

said the detective, with determination.

"And for a clue I didn't discover much upstairs. The shawl that is missing was probably used by the abductors to wrap around her head, and so conceal her face."

"But I should have thought that she would have given an alarm."

"Bless you, they didn't give her the chance!" exclaimed the detective. "The fellows were probably concealed in her room; the moment she entered it, they sprang upon her and applied a drug, which stupefied her. Men are drugged and robbed every day in New York. The doctors say it can't be done, but, nevertheless, it is done, as the police records show. The parties then wrapped the shawl around her head, and carried her out of the house, probably had a carriage in waiting, put her in it, and drove off."

"But I can't understand how they could dare to attempt so bold an outrage?" said the merchant, in amazement.

"The hour was early; the chance of encountering some of my household great. How could they tell that we had gone to bed?"

"Simply enough; whoever carried out this abduction had an accomplice inside the house."

"What?" and Ollkoff started in amazement.

"Some one inside introduced the ruffians. They drugged the girl; then the inside fellow conducted them from the house, of course first assuring himself that everybody had gone to bed. I had this suspicion when I was questioning the girl; that's the reason I led her off on a false scent. Of course she will repeat my words down-stairs among the servants. The one who has acted in collusion with the abductors will believe that his part in the affair is not suspected. He will be off his guard, and the first thing he knows, I'll catch him tripping."

"Mr. Peters, Heaven will surely aid you,

for you are fighting the battle of the weak against the strong, of the helpless girl against her bold, bad enemies," said the old man, impressively.

"I trust so, sir," replied Peters; "and now I must see your servants; and without

"You have discovered a clue?" asked Ollkoff, anxiously.

"Yes, sir; the explanation is a reasonable one. Miss Lillian, after bidding this young lady good-night, and closing the door, suddenly took the idea into her head that she wanted something; a paper or candy or something of that sort, most probably; so she just slipped the plaid shawl over her head and ran out to get it. On the way to the store, or back, something happened to her; a fainting-fit, perhaps. I've no doubt that I'll find out all about it at the station-house."

Ollkoff was about to expostulate against this reasoning, but catching Peters's eye, a knowing wink warned him to be silent.

"Oh, yes, of course—very probably," he said.

"By the way, Mr. Ollkoff, how about that rare book that you wanted to show me the other day?" Peters said, carelessly.

Ollkoff understood the detective's meaning. He wished to speak with him privately.

"Certainly—come into the library."

Ollkoff led the way; Peters followed, while Mary descended into the lower region to tell the servants of the detective's explanation of Miss Lillian's mysterious disappearance; and also to sing the praises of that worthy and astute officer.

"A perfect gentleman!" Such was the housemaid's opinion.

In the library Peters closed the door carefully behind him. The careless expression upon the features of the detective passed away and a thoughtful one took its place.

"Well, well?" questioned Ollkoff, nervously; "you don't really believe in this explanation that you have given?"

"Of course not," Peters replied; "but it is necessary that the girl should believe, and say, that I am satisfied. If certain parties think that I am on a false scent, they won't be so careful to cover up their tracks, as otherwise they might be."

"But, Mr. Peters, pray relieve my suspense?" exclaimed the old gentleman, anxiously.

"She has been carried off," replied the detective, quietly. His composed manner forming a strange contrast to the nervous excitement of the old gentleman.

"Carried off!" cried Ollkoff, in horror.

"That is precisely what has occurred. Do you remember that I remarked that possession was nine points of the law? that brilliant idea has also occurred to somebody else. They have put it in practice, too, by carrying off the girl."

"Ah! then you think that this colonel, who pretends to represent the girl's father, is at the bottom of this outrage."

"That is my thought exactly; and now, I am more and more impressed with the belief that I had first; that is, that the father does not exist; that this colonel is both agent and principal. After his interview with you he came to the conclusion that you might defy him to do his worst, and knowing that he could not produce the father and thus take the girl away from you, by due process of law, he kidnaps her."

"Can it be possible!" exclaimed Ollkoff, in anguish.

"My dear sir, there are stranger crimes committed in this world than you read of in the columns of the newspaper. The fellow is playing a game of bluff with you; he feared that you would prove as good a hand at that as himself. He gets you to make a promise to do nothing underhand; that is, not to hide the girl away, and in the mean time he coolly steals her himself. Yesterday you had the advantage; to-day he possesses it. When he comes to you he will offer to sell the girl to you for five thousand dollars. By Jove! Mr. Ollkoff, this colonel is a far more clever rogue than I thought."

"What is to be done?"

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"Yes, I understand now; you watch him that he may lead you to those who employed him."

"That's the idea exactly," replied the detective.

"Remember, Mr. Peters, money is no object so that you rescue the girl from the hands of these villains!" cried the old man, earnestly.

"I'll do my best, sir; never fear! I'll go down-town at once, and arrange with my partner to take up the scent. Hank will run Mr. Michael to the earth, unless he's a deal smarter chap than I take him to be."

Peters moved toward the door, when it opened suddenly, and John, the servant, entered with a card.

"The same gent as came yesterday, sir," said John, presenting the card.

"Colonel Roland Peyton!" the merchant said, in amazement, as he gazed at the pasteboard.

For once in his life, the keen detective looked utterly astonished.

"What shall I do?" asked Ollkoff, addressing the detective. The merchant was astounded at the visit.

"Why, have him shown in, of course," Peters replied, instantly. The detective had determined upon a plan of action, immediately.

John retired to usher in the colonel.

"I'll retire into the other room; the fellow is playing a bold game; we haven't got any common rascal to deal with here, sir; it will take all our wits to get the best of him!" cried Peters, rapidly, retreating as he spoke, through the door that led into the back parlor.

"But, what shall I say to this man?" demanded Ollkoff, who was completely bewildered.

"Hear what he has to say first; then say what you like in reply; it don't make much difference."

Peters disappeared, and the door closed just as John conducted the colonel into the parlour.

Peyton was gotten up regardless of expense, as usual. He bowed in a very dignified manner to the merchant, and a bland, self-satisfied smile was on his face.

John withdrew and closed the door.

"I trust that you are enjoying good health this morning," the colonel said, urbanely.

Ollkoff glared at the adventurer in rage; he could hardly restrain his passion; he hardly dared to trust himself to speak.

"As you have forgotten to ask me to be seated, I trust you will excuse me if I take a chair without waiting for an invitation," and the colonel sat down.

The merchant could hardly choke down his anger. The cool impudence of his visitor astounded him.

"Now then to business; I trust you will pardon any lack of ceremony on my part; business is business, you know," Peyton said, coming directly to the point. "Have you considered the proposition that I made to you yesterday? Are you ready to give me your answer?"

"Answer, sir!" exclaimed Ollkoff, making a great effort to subdue his rage.

"That is precisely what I said," replied Peyton, coolly. "Which is it to be, five thousand dollars or the girl?"

"You have the impudence to come here and put that question after what happened last night?" cried the merchant, in anger.

The colonel stared in amazement at this outburst of passion.

"Well, sir, I haven't the remotest idea, to what you are alluding!" the colonel replied, astonishment in his voice. "Of course, it is utterly impossible for me to guess what happened last night. If you will inform me, and explain in what way it concerns me, I shall be much obliged to you."

"Upon my word! I think you are the coolest rascal that I have ever seen!" cried Ollkoff.

"I am really much obliged to you for the favorable opinion that you have given of me," replied Peyton, not at all disconcerted. "But as I have once before remarked, to business. Which is it? your election—the money or the girl?"

"How can I give you the girl, sir, when you have already stolen her from me?" cried Ollkoff, in anger.

"What's that you say?" cried Peyton, springing to his feet.

"Your bluster won't avail you here, you infernal scoundrel!" cried Ollkoff, in wrath.

"You abducted the girl from my house last night!"

"Do you mean to say the girl is gone?"

"You know she is gone, you villain! and the merchant shook his clenched fist in the face of the colonel, who retreated a step at the menacing movement.

"Oh! I see your game!" cried Peyton, beginning to show signs of anger. "You have hidden the girl in spite of your promise not to do any thing underhand. You won't beat me! I'll find the girl if she's a thousand miles away! Just you mark me, you shan't have her unless you pay five thousand dollars for her. You need keener wits than you have in your head, Obadiah Ollkoff, to measure strength with me!" Then the colonel made a hasty exit from the house.

Peters re-entered the parlor.

"I don't know what to think!" he exclaimed; "I own up clean beat!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 65.)

Rosa Kent's Riddle.

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER I.

"And now, my dear Rosa, I have come for your answer to my proposal of yesterday."

Thus spoke handsome Fred Travis, as he entered the room where sat the woman of his heart—Rosa Kent.

"What impatient creatures men are!" replied Rosa, a roguish smile upon her lips.

"It is true, I promised you yesterday that I would give you an answer to-day, and here it is in the form of a 'riddle,' and she placed in his hand, a slip of white paper written upon one side."

"Ah! up to your roguish tricks again," returned Fred, taking the paper. "If you evade my question much longer, I shall take it for granted that you do not intend to give me an answer at all."

The dark eyes of pretty little Rosa Kent, the belle of Elmwood, sparkled with merriment, and a smile played about her red, ripe lips as she replied:

"You have accused me, Fred, of trifling with your patience, and to be revenged, I wrote that note, which embodies my answer as to whether I will or will not be your wife. Now you can read it."

Fred smiled at the little torment and at the same time tried to look angry.

"I am not good at guessing riddles," he said, glancing at the paper, then read:

"How serious have been my reflections, how moved my heart, when I recall the past; and when I call to mind the scenes of bygone days, the hand of memory trembles at the touch of those beauteous gems which I know more but the hand of God can give back to you and me, dear Rosa."

"Well," said Fred, when he had finished reading, "I can see nothing in *that*, Rosa, that has the shadow of an answer about it, but rather a lament for the past."

Rosa smiled at her lover's perplexity.

"That is my riddle," Fred replied; "study well the note, for my answer is there in a few words."

Fred looked at the paper again. There were ten words underscored, or italicized.

Why was this, he asked himself, unless Rosa had fallen into the error of young writers of thinking that emphasis would lead to the vigor of their writings? Thus he mused for some time. Suddenly a smile passed over his face. He had faltered the secret of the letter. He had the maiden's answer in black and white. She had plighted him her hand and heart, and he at once proceeded to explain the secret of the note to its author.

"My heart and hand I give to you, dear Fred."

there is a secret in it, Mr. Kent, a secret," said Fred, in an excited manner; "look here"—taking the letter in his hand—"read these words underscored in the order that they occur, and independent of the other words. They form a sentence of themselves, and reveal the secret of Rosa's disappearance, and her present whereabouts."

Mr. Kent adjusted his glasses and read aloud the underscored words in the letter:

"I—AM—A—PRISONER—IN—SHRE—POWER—OF—ORSON—KENNETH—AT—COAST—RUINS."

There was a momentary silence; then Mr. Kent uttered a cry of joy.

"How came you to discover this secret sentence, Fred?" he asked.

"From the fact that Rosa had puzzled me with such a one before," and he drew from his pocket Rosa's "riddle," as she termed it, and read, separate from the others, those words that were underscored, taking them in the order that they occurred. They formed a sentence, and read thus:

"My heart and hand I give to you, dear Fred."

CHAPTER III.

TWENTY miles east of Elmwood, on a bleak, isolated point of rocks overlooking the sea, stood the ruins of an old stone building known as Coast Ruins. When and by whom it had been built, nobody knew.

Some said it had been erected by pirates in Kidd's days, but of this there was no authentic record; and as the place was reported to be haunted, of course nobody felt interested enough to search the place for proof of its being the head-quarters of the freebooters of the Spanish Main.

It was an ugly, rough place, sure enough; and to Magdalean Norman and Bradley Turner left the house in Dauphine street, and started for the Second District Police Station. It was quite a long walk, but Magdalean felt so anxious to learn what her "sometime" father had to say to her, and, withal, was so distressed at his misfortune, that she did not feel the fatigue at all, and was rather surprised when Bradley stopped before the dingy prison and said:

"Well, here we are."

"Is this the police station?" asked the girl.

"Yes, this is the place. Just step in, and we'll see what poor Silas has got to say."

It was a misty, foggy morning, and few persons were abroad in the streets when Magdalean Norman and Bradley Turner left the house in Dauphine street, and started for the Second District Police Station. It was quite a long walk, but Magdalean felt so anxious to learn what her "sometime" father had to say to her, and, withal, was so distressed at his misfortune, that she did not feel the fatigue at all, and was rather surprised when Bradley stopped before the dingy prison and said:

"Well, here we are."

"Is this the police station?" asked the girl.

"Yes, this is the place. Just step in, and we'll see what poor Silas has got to say."

It was an ugly, rough place, sure enough; and to Magdalean Norman it brought a keen feeling of gloom and heartache. She had a very tender heart she now discovered, for the first time; and, whatever her feelings toward Silas formerly were, she experienced nothing but the keenest pity for him now.

"Can we see the prisoner, Silas Norman?" asked Bradley.

"Don't think you can see any Silas Norman," answered the turnkey.

"Why not?"

"Well, for a good and sufficient reason."

"What reason?"

"There ain't no such man here."

"Has he been liberated, then?" Bradley asked, excitedly.

"Well, no," with a yawn, "I guess not, seeing that no person has gotten out yet."

"Was there not a man arrested last night for forgery done in Missouri?" put in Magdalean.

"Yes."

"Well, that's the man, you blockhead," blurted out Bradley, disgusted with what he considered the stupidity of the turnkey.

"Well, I guess that ain't the man, by a jugful," retorted the turnkey. "The man is done that forgery, and is in that cell there, might have called himself Silas Norman, but his real name is nothing but plain Jack Ramsey."

"It don't matter particularly what his name is," interrupted Magdalean; "let us see him please."

"Yes, ma'am, I will," replied the turnkey, with an admiring glance at the stately beauty of the girl.

He unlocked the door at once, and ushered the visitors into a small corridor that ran in front of the rows of cells.

"Oh, my!" was the exclamation that burst from the girl's lips as she caught sight of John Ramsey's woe-begone features, and then she went out to walk there alone between sundown and dark, they springing from their covert and seized her, muffling her voice in the folds of a heavy coat.

She was then conducted to Coast Ruins and locked up in a dark room of the damp old ruins. The following day Kenneth entered her room with paper, pen and ink, and placed them upon a rude table before her. He then informed her that she was to write a letter to Fred Travis, telling him that she had eloped with Orson Kenneth.

Rosa saw the villain's intention, but she was brave and fearless, and as quick-witted as her abductor was unprincipled and scheming.

No sooner had she spoken, than she remembered what her lover had said in regard to the secret cipher, or riddle, she had given him to solve on the day of their betrothal. In fact, some weird voice seemed to whisperer to her: "Never will I forget your riddle, dear Rosa."

At first, she refused to obey his order, but when the smuggler declared she should write the note, she said, resignedly:

"Write out the letter that you would wish me to write, and I will copy it."

"That will do, exactly," he said, and, seating himself, drew up the form of the letter which Rosa copied, verbatim. When she had done, she read the cruel, insulting letter over, and selecting from it such words as would form a sentence, as she had done in her riddle to Fred, underscored them with a double line—thus giving such notice of her imprisonment as would put at rest the minds of her friends and lover and lead to her rescue.

Judge of the young smuggler's surprise when, on the next day after he had dispatched the note to Elmwood, he found himself and party prisoners in the power of a posse of men headed by Fred Travis of Elmwood; and when Rosa had been taken from the room, from which Kenneth had said she should never go until as his wife, and permitted to confront the villain, she very pleasantly informed him how she had revealed her whereabouts in the letter by underscoring a number of words, and which he had noticed on inspecting the letter and had admired it, for he thought it gave additional vigor and tone to the letter, but never dreaming of the secret connected with it.

The villain ground his teeth and swore terribly, but the game was up, and all the way to Elmwood, with his delicate white hands pinioned at his back, was he compelled to march, and all the time within sight of Rosa Kent.

The counterfeiters caught in their haunts were all tried and condemned as their crimes merited, and many goods of great value were found at Coast Ruins being searched.

Rosa and Fred were married, and there was nothing in their possessions that they prided higher than the cipher letter and "riddle," though dearer far than all other keepsakes was the bright-eyed boy that eventually came to add another link to their love.

A Noble Wife.—A bankrupt merchant, returning home one night, said to his wife:

"My dear, I am ruined; every thing we have is in the hands of the sheriff!"

After a few moments of silence, the wife looked calmly into his face, and said:

"Will the sheriff sell you?"

"Oh, no!"

"Will he sell me?"

"Oh, no!"

"Will he sell the children?"

"Oh, no!"

"Then do not say that we have lost every thing. All that is most valuable remains to us—manhood, womanhood, childhood. We have lost but the results of our skill and industry. We can make another fortune if our hearts and hands are left us."

Mr. Kent read the letter, and groaned.

"Fred! Fred! you are crazy! She—she eloped with Kenneth—she has disgraced—"

"No, Mr. Kent, there is a secret about that communication. Kenneth has no doubt forced her to write that letter in full, but

In the Web:

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEART AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER XX.

A REVELATION.

her life, Magdalean Houghton pillow'd her head upon a man's bosom.

"God bless you, Magdalean," was all he could say.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE
Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

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Foolscap Papers.

Personal Recollections.

As it is very fashionable nowadays to give personal reminiscences of distinguished men, I beg to be allowed to give a few of my own earlier acquaintances, and hope that the fashion will be kept up after I have departed for parts both unknown and extremely doubtful, that the hundreds of friends I have may do the same toward me.

Daniel Webster was a bosom friend of mine, and used to chew my tobacco. I did him a favor once which he could never forget. He was troubled with bunions and asked me how he could get them out. I advised him to cut holes in his boots and the bunions would come out themselves. He always considered me his national benefactor. He never could tolerate a hole in the heel of his stocking any more than a flaw in his political principles, and I have often heard him damn them himself. His magnanimous heart was not above eating beans. I used to help him with my advice and assist him in writing his speeches. Dan will always remember me.

When Julius Caesar heard I was in Rome he immediately sent for me, made a good deal over me, and assigned the Coliseum to me as a residence. Jule always looked well in a plug hat, but he never liked paper collars. I don't remember of ever having to kick him, for we always got along very well together.

Jule preferred his ice with a straw in it, and I remember that one night we were out together when he took too much straw in it and I was obliged to assist him to his lodgings.

Not being very firm on his feet he often went to the ground, and I thought so much of him that I always went with him, for I'd stick to him to the last.

My head was very clear and I knew the streets of Rome from Mulberry to Main, and felt confident I could take him right home. He would often stop and throw his arm around me and exclaim, "Ole fellow, you'll never leave me!" and I'd throw my arms around his neck, with "Yer right, Julie, I'm yer fr'en' slong as a drop of old Rye flows in these veins!" and then we would sit down on our hats and cry.

Somewhat in taking him straight home I got him outside the city limits, but I couldn't account for it the next morning.

Jule said he was very glad that modern historians did so much honor to his memory, and spoke often of Jim Fisk, Jr., Horace Greeley and George Francis Train.

His nose crossed the Rubicon before he did.

He used to wear my shirts when he was in the wash, and was so fond of me that he had me for dinner and supper every day in preference to any thing else on the table.

Many's the dime I've loaned him. When I left we exchanged tooth-brushes and shed many groans. He afterwards died from the severest cutting he ever received from his friends.

Alexander, the Great, enjoyed the honor of my friendship. In several of his great battles he wore my boots, which accounts for the fact that he never ran. Aleck had always a good deal to say of his celebrated horse, Bucephalus, and thought that Bonner had nothing finer in his stables. He always preferred the ancient to the modern mode of warfare, and wouldn't allow gunpowder to be used in his army—noting but double-barreled swords, breech-loading spears and fiery chariots. I used to be one of the contents of his contented tent, and was with him when he cut the celebrated Gordian knot, which got in his shoe-string, and I loaned him my knife to cut it with. We never had but one little difficulty, and I licked him for that, and we were better friends than ever after that—he had made the unguarded remark in my presence that there were no more worlds to conquer except the United States, and that he didn't care to go there to conquer it, for he said as soon as he would land in New York the snobs would unhitch the horses from his carriage and make a fool of themselves at their own expense—I knew this was false and was obliged to knock him down.

Aleck was fond of the native Kentucky wine of the Bourbon dynasty, and frequently couldn't tell the stopper from the bottle, for he would fill his bowl very high indeed, and then go there himself. He always thought so much of me that he would never allow me to be out of his sight for fear that he wouldn't see me when he looked at me, and for fear he would miss me when he didn't find me. He was fond of Baltimore oysters, and never stopped for the shells. He finally threw himself away in a whisky-sling, and I was appointed to administrate on his affairs (no little job, for he was an extensive landholder) and to write these memos of him.

Pharaoh, the unfortunate king of Egypt, showed his greatness by thinking there was nobody like me, and he would often run away from his wife and come down to my lodgings and stay all night, talking of the Atlantic cable, the last Fenian raid, Andy Johnson and gum-boils, with which he was favored. I let him have my fine-tooth comb during a certain plague, which he used with a good deal of lice-nise.

He was fearfully troubled with snakes. Poor fellow. I stood on the shore and saw

him expire, when he died of drinking a good deal more water than he wanted. He was a large-hearted man, and loved mustard poultices on his bread.

WASHINGTON WHITEKORN.

"*Judge Jones*," the banker of Spur City; the queer, odd man, who, beneath an icy exterior, conceals a heart of fire; a man of iron will but of terrible passions; the head of the crime-scouring "Vigilantes" who, rising in their might, ornament the pines of the Reese river valley with human fruit—is one of the life-like characters who figure in Mr. Aiken's new serial, "*OVERLAND KIT*".

OPPORTUNITY.

"*THERE* is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

True words were never written. The flood which bears the human bark on to the golden haven will come some time—must come. It may come early in life, when the adventurous youth first tests his strength against the eddying currents of the tide upon which he must swim. Or, it may come when years have cooled the blood and steadied the head. But, let not despair sap the heart and unnerve the hand, even when long years of hopeless toil have exerted their influences.

Wait and hope!

Golden words, that should be written on each heart, treasured in each mind.

Opportunity makes men, or rather makes men's fortunes.

Take our President, Grant, for instance. If it had not been for the opportunity afforded him by the war to show what metal there was in him, it is more than probable that he would have been a simple clerk in the Galena store to-day, instead of swaying the destinies of the Great Republic.

"The man woke to find himself famous!" It is an old saying. Smith says to Brown, "I never thought he had it in him!" Why? because the man never had a chance to show the talents that he really did possess.

Lincoln had a shrewd saying, that, in this world, half the time, the round pegs got into the square holes; they didn't fit. In other words, the opportunity hadn't come to the words.

A wise saying; a true one, too.

Napoleon I. is perhaps the best example of what "opportunity" has done for a man.

What prophet could have predicted that the soul-leutenant, in a few short years, would beat the best Generals of the world? What eye could have detected in the quiet and reserving young soldier, the future conqueror?

So it is in our life to-day; we jostle in the street, unnoticed, the man "o. in a few years, will be famous.

He is waiting for his opportunity. When it comes, comet-like, he will astonish the world.

Nearly all the great discoveries in science, medicine, etc., have been the result of accident. A man searching after one result has discovered another.

The old-time painter, who wished to produce the foaming mouth of a horse upon his canvas, labored in vain. Despite his skill, the foam looked unnatural. In despair, he dashed the sponge against the canvas—in those days sponges served as brushes—when lo, and behold! the sponge, striking on the mouth, produced the foam he had vainly tried to paint there.

So in our life, half the time, the man tumbles into his opportunity without knowing it. He little dreams that he is on the high road to fortune, until proof after proof convinces him that, at last, he has found his proper sphere.

As we have already said, to some the golden opportunity comes early in life, to others late; but, despair not, for he must be unlucky indeed to whom it never comes.

Of course, all will not become wealthy, nor all famous; the sparrow doesn't fly like the eagle, and the ant will never possess the strength of the lion. Men have their grades; when they overstep them, they do not hold their proper position.

The lawyer builds a capital hen-house.

The square peg in a round hole again; he was born for a carpenter, not for the 'legal profession.'

Let no man wonder, then, at sudden success; either the famous one has found his opportunity, and will forever after hold the position he has won, or else it is but the blaze of the rocket to be succeeded again by the darkness of the night.

Watch, wait and despair not! Even when you are crying out bitterly that your opportunity will never come, it may be close at hand. See that you lose it not, but improve the chance. Toil on steadily, and when the time comes strike boldly. It's a weak heart that fears to win.

Two loves for one heart. Bernice Gwyne, the beautiful New York girl, and Jimmie Johnson, the keeper of the "Eldorado"! Strange rivals! One, the dashing city belle; the other, the wild flower of the mines, as pretty as the mountain daisy, and as free in thought and act as the wild mustang. Yet both these girls love the same man. A wild and beautiful story is Mr. Aiken's "*OVERLAND KIT*"; or, *The IDYL OF WHITE PINE*."

FASHION'S FOLLIES.

THE people of this country are not entirely free yet; they still are slaves to a hard taskmaster, or mistress—Fashion. To be out of the fashion is to be almost out of the world. Because Fashion issues her edicts, it is thought necessary to load another woman's hair on the back of our heads, making us look like overgrown pin-cushions. Then we must just allow a lace and a few flowers to rest on our heads, and everybody must be made to believe that it keeps us warm as warm as one of those old-fashioned Leghorn affairs that our mothers talk about, which always was seen long before its wearer came in sight. Sometimes Fashion commands us to wear trains to our dresses, probably for the purpose of seeing how much off we can save the city scavengers from picking up. Just imagine a refined lady bringing home with her a stamp of a cigar, an abandoned piece of chewed tobacco, a few orange-peels, and a couple of old hoops in the train of her dress! Don't you suppose she'd pour her pretty lips a little, and wish that those articles were in their appropriate place, even though she does wish it were not being blessed, and walked away.

What awful words to shock the tender innocent heart of a little child with! Why did she not tell her of the pure One of Nazareth, and of his love for little children, instead of preaching up eternal punishment?

Ah, I think the eyes of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," looked with sadness on the scene.

I can not help thinking that some of the "hard-shelled" religionists are woefully mis-

which will not touch the ground, and make the young men on the corners stare us to death. The only benefit it does is to transfer their gaze from our faces to our feet. Then, if Fashion wants us to go limping about as though we had some deformity, we are expected to do it. I never could look on a Grecian Bend but I thought of poor Christian, who was so anxious to get rid of his burden of sin, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," and I wondered if he ever thought that he would be so closely imitated by his fair followers. I always shall believe that fashion was taken from one of his pictures.

Why should we bow to this goddess, Fashion, and be such slaves to her whims and caprices? Because we are so anxious to look more than well in the eyes of our neighbors.

I've often thought the male sex were relieved of the dire troubles Madame Fashion gives us, but there's brother Tom, who will, at one time, wear pantaloons that resemble those we see upon sailors, in the play at the theater, so loose and baggy they are. A month will pass, and brother Tom appears clad in pants so tight that it seems as though it were a perfect torture for him to sit down. I pity him, and ask him what makes him do so. His reply is: "Fashion, my dear Eve." So the men are just as much slaves as we are.

I don't wonder that fathers look with horror at the fashion magazines, and call them "infernal machines," when they bleed their pocket-books so freely.

How much better a person looks, neatly and simply dressed, and how ridiculously uncomfortable some of our musical ladies appear on the stage of the concert-room, with their tufts and frills! They don't look like human beings animated with a soul, but like lay-figures dressed up for show.

I suppose many will think my talk rather personal when I say that hundreds of men and women have their thoughts upon nothing but dress. Such is the case, however; and kneeling on the velvet cushions of the church, they think more of what they have on, and how much admiration they are exciting than they ought. Don't carry your pride into your head.

And now we'll wander off into good old Bible times, when Fashion had not spread her net to catch us. Don't we often think that Adam and Eve should have been perfectly contented when they were left unmolested by fashion plates? I think so, and that's the reason why I have written this. When I get into the country, don't I envy the youngsters who can wear patched clothes, throw off shoes and stockings, and run about barefooted? They are not annoyed by Fashion's follies.

EVE LAWLESS.

Ali Ling, the Heather Chine, plays a prominent part in Mr. Aiken's new serial, "*OVERLAND KIT*". The poor heathen who came as a "wash'er-woman" to Spur City, but who nearly starved, as the miners had a habit of putting on a fanny shirt and wearing it until it was worn out, therefore did not require the services of a washerwoman. The partisans of the rival mining camps, "Faddy's Flat" and "Gopher Gulch," are also depicted by a master's hand. The serial, brilliant as a clear Colorado day, is a most vivid presentation of Life in the Auriferous Land.

RELIGION IN SACKCLOTH.

IN the class of religious individuals who look upon the world as a "vale of tears," and regard every thing in it as vanity and vexation of spirit, wear as lugubrious countenances in the Hereafter as they do here, and take as cheerful views of things generally, what sort of a place will it be? They will complain that their harps are too heavy, or their crowns not a perfect fit, and their seats will always be a little too high or a trifle too low, they will never be able to play any thing more cheerful than "China" or "Old Hundred," and will make all the crotches and quavers into semibreves at the mouth.

It is not everybody who knows how to laugh. A discreet suppression of merriment—with or without reason. No man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that if he does, he is not a responsible agent.

Laughter is, technically speaking, an involuntary action of certain muscles, developed in the human species by the progress of civilization; and the peculiarities of laughter are so multifarious that it is almost hopeless to attempt to classify them. It is certain that a stupid rustic is generally found on the broad grin, but this is no symptom of the function of risibility; it is merely the vacant stare and open mouth of ignorant admiration, and far removed from the laugh of the perceptive humorist.

It is not everybody who knows how to laugh. A discreet suppression of merriment—with or without reason. No man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that if he does, he is not a responsible agent.

Laughter is, technically speaking, an involuntary action of certain muscles, developed in the human species by the progress of civilization; and the peculiarities of laughter are so multifarious that it is almost hopeless to attempt to classify them. It is certain that a stupid rustic is generally found on the broad grin, but this is no symptom of the function of risibility; it is merely the vacant stare and open mouth of ignorant admiration, and far removed from the laugh of the perceptive humorist.

Men are known by their forms of expressing joy; and to a woman a pleasant, bright laugh is a great gift, and one difficult of imitation. Witness a stage laugh, which always looks as solemn as a graveyard, and never see any thing to laugh at. If they talk to you of religion they solemnly enjoin you to be good and love God, not for the sake of being good, and because God is worthy of love, but because if you don't you will be punished!

I had my previously exalted opinion of Sabbath Schools wonderfully lowered by one of these *'two orthodox Christians'* when I was four years old. I knew all about Sabbath School, from the older children, and was all eagerness on this, my first visit. I looked around on being seated, and was presently approached by a lady with a Bible in her hand. As near as I can calculate, three or four cemeteries, half a dozen grindstones, mingled and concentrated, would produce the exact effect expressed in this female's face. She asked me if I could read, and turned to a little girl beside me, of about my own age, and inquired of her if she loved Jesus. The frank and doubtless truthful answer, since she was probably ignorant of him, was "No!"

"Then," said the woman sternly, "you will go to hell." The child made no reply, and, if she was as shocked as I was, she must have been incapable of doing so. The next information given by the woman was, that it was very hot there, and she must burn forever. Then, doubtless thinking this had frightened the girl into a willingness to say yes, she repeated her first question, and again received a negative reply. On this, she sternly asked if she wanted to go to the warm place mentioned, and reciting an affirmative answer, evidently concluded that her missionary labors with that child were not being blessed, and walked away.

What awful words to shock the tender innocent heart of a little child with! Why did she not tell her of the pure One of Nazareth, and of his love for little children, instead of preaching up eternal punishment?

Ah, I think the eyes of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," looked with sadness on the scene.

I can not help thinking that some of the "hard-shelled" religionists are woefully mis-

taken in the amount of religion they possess. I went to meeting once on a time, in a little log school-house in the backwoods. It was a prayer meeting, and each ancient pillar of the church, after expressing a belief that the Lord was in their midst, declared their firm belief that the world was a wilderness of woe—that there was nothing on the earth, nor in it, that was worthy of their attention—and rejoiced that each day took them nearer Jordan, and shortened their stay in this vale of tears, where everything was trouble, and vanity, and desolation.

I listened to their complaints and aspirations; but, above it all, through the glorious brightness of the summer day, so full of balmy zephyrs and the breath of unfolding blossoms, so instinct with life and light and bird-songs, there sounded in my ears the words, "All things are made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made," and I wondered how people, with all the glorious world He had made around them, could appear so thankless and ungrateful. It seemed to me like accusing God to his face of making the world so disagreeable a place that it was with difficulty they could stay their allotted time in it.

But these people thought they were worshiping God, and could they have read the thoughts in my mind, they would have undoubtedly thought me what one of their number called a "pretty h-a-r-d c-a-s-e!"

LETTE ARTLEY IRONS.

A RECOGNITION.

BY WM. M. F.

The fields are green with smiling June;
The woods ring with the robin's tune;
The mignonette, sweetest of flowers,
Perfumes the cool and shady bower;
A'nd the bright sun shines down on us,
O'er swelling hill and peaceful dale.
Each blushing field doth fully show,
The blessings which God doth bestow;
I see no goodness He hath hurried,
Upon this earth, and none I mind.
How wonderful I know that God doth sway
With love, His scepter day to day.
In spots unfriendly—unknown,
I see the violet bloom alone;
Farewell, fair May; welcome sweet June,
That fills our paths with light and bloom!

The Lawful Wife.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

ANGUS CLAIBORNE slowly ascended the stairs leading to the second floor in the rear portion of his grand but gloomy-looking mansion in—street, Philadelphia. A look of half-doubt, half-fear was upon his face, but there was a cold, merciless glitter in his gray eyes, telling of some stern resolve that would be carried out despite any threatening danger.

He paused before a closed door, and stood with head bowed as if in deep thought. Then producing a heavy key, he unlocked and opened the door, entering and quickly closing it behind him.

He stood upon the threshold of what seemed a prison cell. A deep window, heavily barred, looking out upon the cold cheerless back yard. The dismal clang of iron chains—the half-stifled cry of a prisoner.

Before him, seated upon a low bed, was a woman. That she had been, at no very distant time, more than commonly beautiful, was evident. Young, her features regular, her hair long and glossy.

But there was a wild, scared look upon her face and large dark eyes as she shrank tremblingly back from the stern gaze that was fixed upon her. As she moved, there came the harsh clang of iron chains, fastened around her waist and then to the wall.

"Mercy, Angus! have mercy on your poor wife!" she gasped, stretching her hands appealingly toward him.

"Still that old strain," he cried, impatiently. "Will you never be convinced? I tell you that you are *not* my wife—that I never married you!"

"Angus, why do you say that? We were married—I knew the minister. He was an old family friend. Then why do you deny me?"

"He is dead. The only other witness besides old Agatha is dead. Thus—even admitting that it *was* legal, which I deny and can prove—how can *you* prove it?" coldly sneered the man.

"Angus, you are jesting—you do not mean this—you will not deny your wife?"

A cold laugh was his only reply.

"Angus, my husband, think what you do. I am your wife; I ask you by the memory of the time gone by to abandon this foul scheme. We were happy once—we may be again if you will only listen to reason. I loved you dearly then—I will still if you free me and love me as you did when we first met. I will never betray you. We will go far away from here, to a country where we are not known, and begin life anew. Angus—husband—do not look so coldly upon me! Your eyes pierce my heart and make me shudder! I am afraid of you now, when you look like that!" murmured the woman, as she shrank back still further.

"Alice," said Claiborne, and his voice sounded harsh and grating: "you rave and know not what you say. The past is dead, and better for you that it is so. You shall never leave this room alive, unless you consent to what I asked of you. Give me up that paper—the certificate of your marriage, and then we may go where you will."

"If the ceremony was a farce, as you say, what good can the paper do?"

"It will keep you from making trouble. Without that, no one would listen to you, nor would dare to make a stir in the matter. With it you might find some one fool enough to believe your story, and I don't wish my name talked about; just now, especially."

"Just now?"

"Yes. I am to be married, and—"

"Married? You are married! I am your wife, and while I live—"

"You do not live, except in this room. You died in Italy. Your grave is there, marked with an elegant tombstone, erected by a sorrowing husband," sneered the man.

"Angus!"

"'Tis true. You were in my way. I did not like to shed blood, and you were obstinate. So I gave out that you were dead. No one saw you brought here. No one but myself and old Agatha knows that you are here now."

"But this must end soon. I told you I was about to be married. So I am—to a lady whom I love far better than I ever did you. Even if I did not, she has money enough to make it an object. We will be married to-morrow evening at Grace Church, and start at once for the Continent."

"I have left orders that you should be cared for. Agatha will attend to that. I furnished her plenty of money, and there are insane asylums here as well as in England, that are discreetly kept, and whose owners ask no troublesome questions as long as they are well paid. You will be entered as Agatha's daughter, and kept where you can never trouble me."

"This is what will be done, unless you think better of it, and give me that paper. Then as soon as we are gone, you may go your way in peace. Will you consent? It will be better for us both, perhaps."

"Never! I know you now! The scales have fallen from my eyes and I see you in your true colors—a merciless, cold-blooded schemer. But I will foil you—if it costs me my life! I will foil you and expose you to the world! You can never find the paper—it is in a safe place, and will be brought up to foil your plans. You may triumph for a while, but the reward will come, sooner or later."

"You rave, Alice. You are in my power and can do nothing. It will soon be too late. Better reflect. I give you one more chance. Which do you choose?"

"I have told you, was the firm reply.

"So it is, then. You have only yourself to blame. It is not likely you will ever see me again, as this may be my last visit here. My wife—ha! ha!—I salute you!" laughed Claiborne, as he turned to leave the room.

"Neither of which facts shall deter me

The door clanged heavily behind him, and the eyes of the terribly-wronged wife drooped to the floor. Suddenly a bright light overspread her pale and haggard features. A gleam of hope presented itself.

There, upon the floor where he had stood, lay a small key of a peculiar pattern. A second glance showed her that it was indeed the one that unlocked the chain that bound her.

She sprung forward to secure it, forgetting her situation for the moment. With a metallic clangor the chain straightened out, and she fell heavily to the floor. The key was just beyond her reach.

In vain she struggled and strained her arms. When fully extended, the coveted article was two feet beyond them. For a moment Alice despaired.

To see freedom so nigh, and yet so distant, was bitter indeed. It secured freedom, although even then she would be a captive. She well knew that no strength of hers could force the door or window.

Help from old Agatha she could not expect. The hag was faithful to her foster son. But still, the chain once loosened, Alice believed she could escape.

For a moment she lay in apathetic despair. Then her face lightened with renewed hope. She arose and grasped a blanket from the bed.

Doubling this, the prisoner cast it over the key, still retaining the ends. Twice she did this, and each time brought the key a trifle closer. Then, with a wild cry of joy, Alice grasped it, and the next moment the iron girdle fell from her waist.

She was altogether passing fair, and as Roy Davenal watched her from the library, whither he had caught a glimpse of Mr. De Vigne as he strode hastily past, he felt a strange aching at his heart that this Albert De Vigne, with his handsome black eyes and jetty blackness of hair, his courtly ways and winning smiles, would win and wear the fair, golden-haired girl whose blue eyes held all his heaven, in whose low, pure laugh he took in the sweetest melody earth could offer.

So he sat, watching her as she watched De Vigne, never dreaming she had but just refused his offer of marriage, at first kindly, though firmly, then indignantly, when her suitor attempted to coerce her by persuasions that were angry, and threats that were cruel.

After a moment Cora came in from the doorway, wondering if Albert De Vigne would dare prove his words, and wishing "way down in her coy little heart, yet with an intensity that sent the carnation to her cheeks, that it had been Mr. Davenal who had made her offer. But then, and a little sigh floated between the parted pomegranate lips—Mr. Davenal didn't care for her!

from making you realize that I will not be trifled with, with the impunity you seem to think. I tell you, Cora Rainor, you'll be sorry for this day's work—you'll rue it, and that too before a fortnight rolls over your head."

His sudden tempest of passionate ardor had subsided into a quiet, terrible earnestness, that, with the pale, compressed look around his lips, made the girl wonder, for a minute, with a vague sort of fear, if it was true what he said. She would have asked him, but at that moment he caught up his hat, and walked rapidly out the door, that stood wide open, that warm, bright Easter Monday. She very naturally watched him out of sight, her rare, bright blue eyes taking on a slight expression of puzzlement, not a little of amazement.

She made an unconsciously pretty picture as she stood there in the doorway, her light round figure bending gracefully forward, and the long skirt of her blue silk dress lying in heavy folds around her. Her fair hair, brushed off her forehead in *Pompadour*, fell in a thick, half-curly mass at the back of her shaped head, and now, as the April zephyrs lifted the golden tresses, they were wafted wind-blown over her pink-tinted cheeks and white neck.

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Then the minutes rolled into hours, without result. The sun crept slowly around to the west, and Alice could see it sink behind the hills. Would she never come? And that evening the wedding was to take place!

Then the stairs without creaked under the slow, heavy tread of the Janitress. Alice crouched still closer and grasped her weapon afresh. The key grated in the lock and the door swung open. The wife sprang forward with a low cry and dealt the woman a fearful blow with the chair-leg. A low

cruel grasp, till the tiny, narrow, golden bracelets cut into her tender flesh.

"Cora Rainor, I say, you are not going to escape me. You either swear, over your mother's grave, to marry me, or I swear to—well, I will have my revenge, and you'll never see home again!"

A low, pitiful scream came from her lips.

"No—no, Mr. De Vigne, you will not, you dare not! My sainted mother, whose spirit hovers here, will surely keep me from your cruel hands!"

"Then you refuse?"

He bent down till his hot breath flamed over her cheeks, and his voice was hoarse and merciless.

"I can not marry you—oh! for God's sake don't, Mr. De Vigne."

The wild ejaculation came leaping from her lips, for she had seen a moist handkerchief drawn from his vest pocket, in a square box that he dashed to the ground. Its cold, wet surface touched her face, and then—

Mr. De Vigne quickly lifted her from the grass, and a half-dozen steps brought him to the one vault of the little cemetery.

He rushed in, laid Cora unconscious form on the dark, mouldy floor, and then, with wild eyes and ghastly lips, drew to the heavy oaken door that he had been hours unfastening in the darkness of the night preceding, and from where he had seen Cora enter that afternoon.

"Above the stars?"

"Well, not exactly," returned the other, smiling. "Did I say the stars? Yes? I mean, of course, the clouds. Come, now, boy, and reply to my interrogation, as amended!"

"To tell the truth, Granville," answered Heber Ditson, "I scarce know what to say; and yet I do not wish to decline your kindness."

"An engagement, then?"

"A sort of one."

"With Ollie? Do not disturb the sweet little creature to-night, Hebe. You know you are to be married next week. She will get enough of you then, and vice versa. Come, make up your mind for the little aerial trip I propose."

"Yes, I'll go, if for nothing else than to please you, Gran. Is the Sky-bird ready?"

"Nearly so," said Granville Fortney, exhibiting great pleasure at his chum's decision. "I can put her in trim in a few minutes. Right wheel! Hebe, you'd make a poor soldier."

The friends laughed as they turned into a street which terminated in the eastern suburbs of Wellsburg.

A short walk, during which a lively conversation was maintained, brought the twain to an uncultivated lot, in the center of which might have been seen a beautiful little gas balloon, as taut as a well-manned sloop. The net-work was stretched to its utmost tension, and the aerial bird seemed eager to launch upon the atmospheric sea.

"I inflated the little bird before I sought you, Hebe," said Fortney, proceeding to prepare the balloon for departure. "I did not count upon your refusal, and you see I was right. I tell you, Hebe, I envy you the beautiful and inestimable jewel you are going to gain next Friday. You know, boy, that I loved Ollie Griffith once, and, by Jove! I love her still. To know her is to love her. The sweet angel! Why, Hebe, when she whispered, 'No,' to my, 'Will you become my bride, Ollie?' I was thunderstruck. My heart became still—a mass of icy steel in my breast—and I walked from the arbor, never uttering another word. And when I heard—as I did a few days after my rejection—that she loved you, I cried, 'God bless Hebe Ditson!' Hebe, you will take good care of Ollie, if for nothing else than my sake."

"Indeed I will, Gran," said big-hearted Heber Ditson, something very like a big pearl glistening upon his cheek. "There you are ready now, I suppose."

"Yes, jump in."

Heber obeyed, and saw his companion follow his example.

"One more jerk," said Granville, tugging at the rope which kept the balloon on *terra firma*. "There! Hold fast, Hebe! Now, up we go—like a rocket!"

It took the air vessel but a moment to penetrate the pure, strong atmosphere above the house-tops, and before the twain could suitably congratulate themselves upon their invigorating ride, the balloon was passing through the opaque clouds that prevented Luna and her companion worlds of brightness from showering their ambient light upon the earth.

All at once the balloon burst into the full blaze of the sky-sphere.

"How beautiful!" cried Fortney, gazing upon the indescribable celestial sight.

"Look yonder, Hebe, at Polaris! Is she not the queen of the stars? Ha! my Sky-bird enters a current of southern air, and away we fly toward the North Star. Perhaps we can shoot a 'good-night' to the inhabitants. On, on, yet up, up. Isn't this delightful?"

"Up in a balloon, boys,"

"Up in a balloon,

"On a voyage of discovery—

"Sailing round the moon."

An indescribable tone pervaded the singer's voice; but young Ditson, knowing his companion's temperament, ascribed it to excitement.

Many minutes passed—perhaps thirty—and still the Skybird kept on in its upward path, with a rapidity that was astonishing.

Another quarter of an hour.

Still up, up—heavenward.

The atmosphere was contracting, and the cold compelled Heber Ditson to don his overcoat, remarking as he completed the operation:

"Gran, I think we have attained sufficient altitude. I should judge that we are twelve thousand feet above Wellsburg. I, therefore, counsel descent, and suggest that we enjoy a smoke till dawn, in my study."

Fortney seemed to take no notice whatever of his chum's words.

"We have reached an altitude nearer fourteen thousand feet than twelve; but, we are not going to stop till we reach Benetnasch. You see him yonder in the tail of Urs Major. We are going straight to him now."

"Do descend to reason, Gran," said Heber, a gust of icy wind piercing his heart.

"Open the throttle. I'll freeze to death away up here, in a short time. Well, if you are determined to go to Benetnasch, I am not. I'll open the valve."

"You will not, sir!" cried Fortney, in an unnatural tone.

"What do you mean, Gran?" asked Heber, looking up into his face but half-revealed in the dim lantern light.

"That we are going to Benetnasch," was the mad reply. "Take your hand off that cord, or, by heaven! we'll have a funeral on the planet when we get there."



THE LAWFUL WIFE.

Cora's Revenge Lover.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

By the memory of your rejection of my suit, I swear to be revenged, proud, fearless woman that you think you are."

Albert De Vigne's black eyes were looking the enraged vengeance he felt, and Cora Rainor's face grew more haughty in its derisive beauty; and her eyes flashed a sudden, sickening fear palsied Cora's soul. Would he dare murder her—here, by the grave of her mother—here, in the open sunlight?

"Oh, Mr. De Vigne! do not use such language—it can avail you nothing, I am sure."

"Your answer—yes or

Heber saw a revolver leveled at his head, and sunk back with a groan. Then he saw a light in Fortney's eyes which he had seen in the orbs of maniacs confined within Mount Hope's walls.

"My God, he's mad!"

Those soul-chilling words bubbled to his colors lips unsummoned.

Still up, toward Benetnasch the planet. And before him stood the mad ryal, with glaring eyes and leveled pistol.

It was a fearful situation.

At length an altitude of twenty thousand feet was attained.

Just think of it. Twenty thousand feet above the earth, and in a madman's power.

"Yes, we are going to Benetnasch!" cried the maniac, fiendishly. "I'll leave you there, return alone, and marry Ollie. I've set my head on that, and all things present and those to come can not alter my determination. There goes our light! Well, let it go. A deputation will come down from Benetnasch, directly, with torches. Ha! ha! ha!"

Such a laugh! Pandemonium might produce its rival, which had never rent the air since the earliest dawn of light!

As the balloon rose the air became rarer, and at last it was so attenuated that respiration grew difficult. At length the least movement on the part of either of the men caused the aerial bird to oscillate and perform a waltz which could not end otherwise than in destruction.

Heber Ditson grew desperate as he thought over his fearful situation—of the sweet little creature thousands of feet below him.

He resolved to make a struggle for life. He felt that his safety depended upon his physical strength, which was superior to Fortney's in his sane moments. But what additional power the demon Insanity had given him he knew not.

He began to rise.

"Down I!" shouted the madman.

"I'm tired of sitting," said Ditson, calmly meeting the flash of the devilish eyes. "I'm going to Benetnasch with you, Gran. Look yonder. Is that not the planet's deputation?"

Ditson's finger pointed over the maniac's shoulder, and, completely thrown off his guard, Granville turned.

The next moment Heber had struck the weapon from his grasp, and it was falling down, down, through space, like a returning rocket.

The demon turned with a howl of rage, and threw himself upon Ditson. The young man shunned not the contest, and in that frail basket, far above the clouds, the fiercest struggle ever recorded took place. The movements of the twain caused the balloon to perform tremendous circles in the thin air, like a madman in the wildest delirium of insanity.

Below them all was dark, while far above a million resplendent worlds contemplated the frightful scene.

Such a struggle could not last long.

Suddenly Heber's hand closed upon his mad antagonist's throat. He forced him to the edge of the basket, struggling still.

The next moment something dark, resembling a great ball, was falling down, down, everlasting down!

Heber Ditson was the sole occupant of the fatal basket!

He staggered to the valve-cord, and managed to give it a few jerks before he sank down insensiblē.

The aerial monster ceased to oscillate and began to descend. The descent was rapid, too rapid for safety; but the victor knew it not.

The next day some farmer found him twenty miles from Wellsburgh, "bruised and wounded by the fall." His second escape was as miraculous as the first.

And, scarce a mile from where he lay, was found a shapeless mass of flesh and bone.

Poor Fortney! He never got to Benet-

nasch.

The Winged Whale:
OR,
THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
AND "WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE CAPTURE.

WITH an anxious brow the commandante, Don Alvarado, paced the ramparts of the fort. Messenger after messenger had brought news of the near approach of the American army.

The Spanish commander had made all possible preparation for the attack, but, as he looked upon the little body of soldiers that composed his army, he fully realized that resistance was almost hopeless.

Many an anxious glance he cast seaward. He looked for the white sails of the coasting schooner, but saw them not. Then, as he looked toward the land, he beheld the advance guard of the American army.

Slowly the troops came on, until, at last, the lines of the besiegers, extending from beach to beach in a half-circle, completely surrounded the fort.

The American lines were just beyond the range of the fire from the fort.

A bitter smile came over the swarthy face of the Spaniard as he surveyed the foe through a field-glass and noted they had no artillery.

"Without cannon they can not batter down my walls, and I'll hold the fort while a soldier remains!" he muttered, as his gaze rested on the dark line that encircled the fortification. "My guns will play havoc with them as they move over the level plain to the assault. What can detain Estevan?"

As he asked the question again, he looked seaward. This time the white sails of a vessel met his eyes, beating up the New Orleans. The commandante denounced him as Lafitte that he might remove him from his son's way. And, now, listen to another truth, Nanon: you are not the daughter of the pirate; I told you the story that the stigma of your birth might separate you from this Spaniard, who was unworthy of your love, and has played you false from the first.

You are the daughter of an old shipmate of mine; he died and consigned you to my care. By a lucky streak of fortune I was enabled to leave the sea and I devoted myself to you. I tell you frankly I have deceived you, for Antoine Baptiste will be honest with you. I have learned to love the child that I have watched over since infancy. Let that love be my excuse."

"Baptiste, you have been a brother to me," Nanon said, slowly, taking the rough hand of the sailor between her own white palms; "can I ever pay you for all you have done for me?"

"Yes," cried the Frenchman, dropping on his knee by her side, encircling her waist with his arm and gazing up with eyes full of tender passion into her face.

"How?" she asked, looking into the earnest face of the man who knelt by her side.

"Let me be ever by your side, ready to guard you against all the evils of this world; I do not ask you to love me; let me still be your brother."

"Baptiste, I can only repay you in one way," she said, slowly and softly; "you shall be my husband. Give me one year to forget the man who now lies beneath the sea and then I am yours forever."

Then he leveled the glass at the strange craft.

"Her decks are full of men, and I can see the glitter of a brass piece amidships," he murmured. "She flies at her peak, and comes steadily on as if well acquainted with the harbor."

Gently, the sailor kissed the white brow of

the girl. From that hour their paths in life ran side by side. In time, Nanon forgot

the thought of her father.

"It is an American!" he muttered, in despair.

And then, as if in answer to his words, a flag was run up, and as it lazily unfolded itself in the breeze, the banner of the Republic, the "Stars and Stripes," was displayed.

"Resistance is useless!" the commandante cried, in despair; "all my guns are *en bâbette*. That brass piece amidships is probably an eighteen-pounder, whose range is far greater than any of my own. He can lay off beyond the line of our fire and dismount my pieces one by one."

Then an officer, bearing a white flag, galloped forth from the line of the besieging army and approached the fort.

The American cruiser rounded to, let go her anchors, clewed up her sails, and opened her ports in warlike array.

The officer halted a short distance from the fort.

The commandante approached the edge of the rampart.

"Your business, señor?" the Spaniard asked.

"To see the commanding officer of this post."

"Why does the American General attack the city of a nation with which his republic is at peace?" demanded the commandante.

"I am not here, señor, to discuss political questions but warlike ones," replied the officer, curtly. "I am instructed by General Jackson to inform you that, if you decline to surrender, our forces will open fire on my pieces one by one."

"Return to your commander; tell him that, in order to save the effusion of blood, I will surrender, but I protest against this unwarrantable outrage upon a neutral power," said the commandante, with stately courtesy.

"Forgive me!" and Isabel passed rapidly to the side of the cold Spaniard and laid her hand upon his shoulder. "I could not bear the love that is in my heart."

"You are not to blame, poor child," the Spaniard said, affectionately. "I must blame myself, and one who has now gone far from earthly judgment. Freely I give to you the man you love, if my poor consent will make you one whit the happier, señor," and he turned to the sailor. "I have wronged you; I own it frankly, and I ask your pardon. But, one thing I swear to you: I never sought your life. When I caused you to be arrested as the pirate Laflite, it was to prevent you from killing my son, Estevan, or from killing you. I saw that there would be murder done if you were both at liberty."

"I believe you, señor," Rupert replied.

"And now, I have a favor to ask at your hands."

"A favor from me?" asked the Spaniard, with a searching glance into Rupert's face, as he spoke.

"Yes; listen to me. Some years ago there lived in this city of Pensacola a boy whose birth and parentage were a mystery. He was brought up by an old fisherman. When he was fourteen years of age he dared to forget that he was almost a slave—for the red blood of the Indian mingled with the white drops in his veins, and all, save one, looked upon him as being little better than the black. He committed what was called a crime by the Spaniards. The lash repaid his fault. Smarting with shame he fled from the scene of his disgrace and vowed that he would never return until he had won a name, that even the proudest Spaniard would not dare to scoff at. Time passed on; the boy became a man; little by little, he fought his way upward, cheered by one hope alone. From the forecastle he gained the quarter-deck. He won the commission of captain in the naval service of the United States. Then he returned to Pensacola, two objects in his mind; first, to win the girl whose face had been ever with him amid all his toils and dangers; second to unravel the mystery that surrounded his birth. I am the man whose career from the fisherman's boy to the American captain I have traced." And now, señor commandante, I ask you, do you know aught of my parents?"

"Why do you put such a question to me?" the Spaniard asked, slowly, his gaze half-averted from the face of the sailor.

"Because your features are familiar to me; they recall memories of my childhood—of troops of dark-hued warriors standing round me; the red chiefs of the forest. I feel a presentiment that, in some way, you are connected with my early life," Rupert replied.

For a moment there was silence in the room. The commandante seemed struggling with many emotions. At last he spoke, slowly:

"Senor," he said, "if I speak, my words will revive painful memories that, for long years, I have striven to forget; but I will reveal all that I know. Years ago, a young brother of a noble house in old Spain killed an opponent in a duel. The slain man was the son of one of the high officers of the government. The young man was obliged to fly for his life. In order to evade pursuit he enlisted as a common soldier in a battalion of foot, *en route* for the New World. He came here to Pensacola. Again his fiery temper led him astray. Another victim fell by his sword, and, hunted like the wolf, he fled to the shelter of the forest and sought refuge with the Indians of the Appalachee tribe. Chance favored him here. The great medicine-man of the tribe was a white sailor who had been shipwrecked on the coast. The savages saved his life, and he, being without kin or kin in the world, became one of them. Naturally shrewd, the sailor soon persuaded the untutored red-men that he was possessed of superhuman powers. On his breast was graven a strange device—sailor-fashion—which he declared was the token of the Great Spirit. The mark was a huge Winged Whale. The Indians called him 'The man-with-the-flying-fish,' and revered him as an agent of the Great Spirit."

"In the white Indian, the Spanish soldier found a friend. Then again fortune favored him; a beautiful young girl, the flower of the Appalachee nation, loved the white stranger, who became his wife. A son was born to the soldier. The medicine-man charmed it from all danger by placing on its baby breast a Winged Whale, like unto the mark he bore.

"Two years only the soldier lived in the tribe, for then a Spaniard sought him in the forest with strange news from Spain. The soldier's older brother had died; the assailant against him had been removed, and wealth and honor waited for him in Spain. He deserted his wife and babe and returned to his native land."

"I then am the child of this soldier, for I bear upon my breast the mark of a Winged Whale," exclaimed Rupert. "But my father?" he asked; "his name, and does he live?"

"He was called Steel-arm, and he is dead," replied the commandante, slowly.

"The white man lies," said a deep, guttural voice, and through the open window the old Indian chief bounded, nimbly, into the room.

The commandante started in terror, and his face became deadly pale.

"O tee-hee was once a great chief of the Appalachee nation; he was the brother of

Lupah, the flower of the tribe. He gave her to the false white man who ran back to his wigwams across the big salt lake. The red squaw died—her heart shattered as the forked light shatters the oak. The red chief took the child of the false white man and gave it to the dwellers in the big wigwams here. He said he would kill the white chief when he met him, but now he spits at him in contempt. Young brave, you are the child of Lupah; there stands your father!"

With outstretched finger, the chief pointed to the commandante, who sunk speechless into a chair.

Rupert and Isabel looked on in amazement, hardly able to believe their ears.

"Pardon our intrusion, señor," Rupert said.

"Through the open window could be seen the groups of palmetto trees, their leaves shining silver in the moonbeams.

The features of the Spaniard showed traces of deep emotion. Dark lines of care seemed the face, and despair cast its cloud over his brow.

"Heaven forgive me for the crime I have committed!" cried the Spaniard.

"The Indian has spoken the truth, I am thy father; Estevan was thy half-brother. I strove to do all in my power to keep you from injuring each other. I favored him, I know, for he, though the youngest born, was dearer to my heart than you, the child that I deserted in infancy. Rupert, can you forgive your guilty father?"

The commandante, rising, approached the soldier with outstretched hands.

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riors were there, had landed on the same side of the lake as that where the Avengers were concealed, skirted the edge, and descended toward a dense timber at the southern end of the lake, and in this direction Kenewa took his way.

His eyes were fixed upon the ground, upon the trail which the careless ruffians had left, and at length his patience was rewarded by a discovery of the spot on which they were camped. A dim light through the trees indicated the position.

They were assembled where a large spreading chestnut threw forth its aged arms over a small hillock. The spot was like the secret fastness of some wild animal, some beast of prey. It was guarded on one side by a small river, and on the other by a complicated screen of underwood, consisting principally of those luxuriantly plaited vines which mark the upper American woodlands.

Here sat the ruffians, carousing. A small fire of brushwood had been kindled near the foot of the chestnut, and its blaze was sufficiently strong to throw a bright glare of light on the motley crew. They had been broiling venison, late as the hour was; this Kenewa could tell by the odor. But now one and all were busily engaged in filling up cans with steaming hot whisky punch, which they ladled out from a kind of keg—that that hung from three sticks over the fire.

The Huron saw that the ruffians were in for a carouse, and a smile of grim satisfaction passed over his dusky countenance as he thought how, when lying in the soothed sleep of the drunkard, he would crawl up, slay and scalp the whole lot; afeat in his eyes doubly glorious, as enabling him to claim the thanks of his fellow Hurons, and to possess himself of trophies of valor that did not often swing on the tent-pole of a Huron brave.

The four Bandits, whose backs were to him, were, when he crawled to within a dozen feet of the fire, watching Mike Horne, who, with the appetite of a wolf, was devouring slice after slice of venison, as if he feared he should never eat another meal.

"Well, now," said Mo, "it is a sight to see a feller eat like that. Mike, you'll breed a famine!"

"You'd eat, too, if you'd have gone through as much as this child has to day."

"Well, spit it out. Where did them beauties come from?" said Mo.

"Darn the she-devil's skin I say," growled Mike; "thof I karn't help larin'."

And he took a very large pull at the whisky can.

"Tell your story," said Mo.

"Well, yar it is. I was loafin' up the hill, a-dodging about to find if I could see a like-ly bit of a buck to shute, or one of them ramping red-skins to pop off, when, all of a sudden, if I didn't kin across the prettest print of a moccasin in the sand of the pine bannen as ever I see!"

"A gal?" said Mo.

"You're right, and a spanker, too!"

"Well, go on."

"I foller'd her. She didn't walk very quick; so in about ten minutes I kin in sight of her, and curse me, if it warn't that Martha gal of Judge Mason's!"

Mo frowned. "Jist you wait a bit. Now I know'd as how she would be scared, so I crawls up to whar she was a-sittin' on a log, a-lookin' at her face in a bit of broken glass; thin I seed, darn me, it warn't Martha at all!" continued Mike.

"Who was it?"

"A red-skin squaw dressed up in the white gal's furbelows," continued the ruffian.

"Well, I claps my hand on her shoulder and gives her a grip."

"Come along with me," says I.

"Pale-face thief!" she says, quite quiet.

"Now this put my dander up, and I plainly told her that I wanted a squaw, and she said she wouldn't have me. I ups and tells her she war mine and not to be foolish. She then got away a bit; but I wader her, though she did run like a good un. Well, at last I overtook her, when, thunder and snakes, a fine idea struck me!"

"Out with it!"

"Well, coming along, I picked up a knife belonging to that cussed Steve, the scout."

"Oh! oh!" cried the ruffian.

Kenewa breathed hard, and clucked his rifle.

"I know'd them Shawnees had their dander up about him; so what does I do, but drags the gal to where there war a pool and put her in it, arter which I sticks the damned niggur's knife right up to the hilt in her heart, and then I leaves her!"

Then the Indians will suspect that long-shanks of a scout," said Moses, gravely.

"Yes."

"Well, if they don't, just you keep out of their way, Master Mike; and if they don't roast you alive, my bully buff, don't say I said so."

"You gives a feller precious consolation," said Mike.

"Well, if you want to know my opinion, when yet want to do any thing with these red-mugged wood-scouters, leave their women alone—lastwise their gal's."

Three of the Bandits now lay down to sleep, while the others prepared to watch.

Mike was too exhausted and weary, he having, as explained to the sentinel, hid in a bush, until he saw the scout come up and draw his knife from the body.

He then recounted the story of Steve's capture by the Indians, whom, in his exultation and triumph, he had followed to the very verge of their village. Then tired and weary, he had made the best of his way to the camp.

To analyze the feelings of Kenewa—first, as regards the vile outrage and brutal murder of the girl, and then as the fate of his friend was being developed—would be impossible. 'Twere vain to paint the fearful passions that assailed his bosom, the storm of indignation and of rage which made his breast heave, his eyes glare, and his cheeks burn. For a moment his calm resolution, common sense and keen knowledge of the world forsook him, but only for a moment.

"Death to the murderous gang," he still vowed, "without a thought of mercy!" But his first resolve was to save Steve, whose perilous position he well understood. After a moment's consideration his mind was made up.

Selecting a spot for repose where he was safe from the observation of the five ruffians, the Huron lay down with a determination to sleep, which, in the case of a red-skin, seldom fails of being carried out.

It was some time in the morning ere he awoke, but though for a moment he gave a start, he soon saw that he had not lain too long.

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SWAMP POETRY.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

The golden sun o'moonlight gilds
The frog-pond's sunn of green;
Enchanted bullfrogs dreamin' sweet,
Sit in the mud serene.
Turtles, retired from busy life,
Sit on the log, rovin' free.
Scratchin' their ears, with their hind feet,
And smilin' in repose.

Translucent tadpoles, full of grace,
Go wiggle through the mud,
In youthful innocence of heart
And nobleness of blood.
And well-developed heads they have,
With very plump cheeks.
They're likely to be troubled much
With water on the brain.

The fly's leaves they drift around
Like little ships abroad,
But with no fairy passenger
Save now and then a toad.
Anon a snake puts up a log
To say—"How do you do?
I'd like to see you."
To take a bite at you!"

A haunt for wold sick poes this—
For those who think they see
In ghastly places, dismal swamps,
Some hidden harmony.
For here all day upon a log
They might remain
And sit there with party
Through such a song as mine.

And here how easy 'tis for one
To fall into a daze!
I feel my mind relapsing, now,
And wasps upon my nose.
My dray is not disturbed
By frog or porcupine.
And all my cares they roll away,
And I roll off the log.

The Patriot's Daughter.

A TRUE STORY OF THE WATAREE.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

MOTHER, I commit her to your keeping. Watch over her with unceasing vigilance, and take her life without a moment's hesitation should you detect her in an attempt to escape."

After thus instructing the toothless virgin who called him son, Burke Holdencraft, the Tory, clad in the flashy uniform of a commissioned dragoon, stepped to the door.

Maggie Gleason, his beautiful prisoner, followed his example.

The next instant the hag clutched her arm, and drew back her crooked crutch in a threatening manner.

"Another step, my girl," she hissed, in discordant voice, "and I'll mark you for life. She shall not escape, Burke," she continued, addressing her son. "Have no fears on that score. I will watch during the day, and Black Bess shall be with her through the night."

"Now see that you keep your word, mother, for should I return to-morrow night, and find her missing, by Heaven! I'll kill you."

What! kill his mother? Already Burke Holdencraft was a fraticide; therefore, would you think him too scrupulous to add matricide to his many enormous crimes? Yes, he had taken the life of his patriot brother, who had enlisted in the little army of struggling freemen.

Flying to the British, his hands still reeking with his brother's blood, he was commissioned captain of a company of Tory dragoons, and soon made his name a terror to defenseless homes.

Nestling in the beautiful valley he swore to devastate, was the home of Maggie Gleason, who, at the outbreak of hostilities, spurned his unholy passion for the love of Roscoe Bentley, a brave soldier who rode to victory with "Light-horse Harry Lee." The ruffian smothered the rage occasioned by his rejection, and patiently bided his time.

At last it came.

One night, like the night-hawk, he swooped down into the quiet valley, and summoned the Gleasons to their door with the crackling torch.

Maggie's father—feeble widower—was roughly handled, and bound. Then the girl was secured, and, after ransacking the house, to which they applied the torch, the Tories rode away with their booty. Mr. Gleason was taken to the British camp, while Maggie found a jail in the shape of Burke Holdencraft's home, and his mother her relentless guardian.

The morning succeeding the brutal act the Tory took his departure, as the reader has seen; and Maggie was hustled into the only room the second story of the hut contained.

During the past night the Tory had greatly strengthened the apartment by nailing the window down. He might almost have spared himself the task, for it was beyond Maggie's reach, and her couch consisted of a pile of straw on the uneven floor.

The day passed wearily enough to the poor girl, and when night threw her somber pall over the world, Bess, the repulsive negress, took the hag's place, and became Maggie's companion in the attic.

The negress possessed no humane feelings. She would have strangled the patriot's daughter at a word from the Tory. She hated the Americans from the depths of her heart, for General Greene had convicted her ebony husband of being a spy, and had him promptly executed.

The old-fashioned clock was striking eight when Burke Holdencraft returned.

The negress was dozing in one corner of the attic, and Maggie threw herself upon the straw to listen to the conversation progressing between mother and son.

"Well, mother," said Burke, in his loud voice, "to-morrow night our swords drink patriots' blood."

"Good!" cried the heartless hag, clapping her skinny hands. "Where do you strike?"

"Among the Americans, beyond the mountain ridge. Our spies brought us the cheering information that a portion of Light-horse Harry's legion had encamped at the foot of the Giant Spur for a few days. They were sent to protect the valley, you know. But the best thing connected with the information is that the rebels are commanded by Roscoe Bentley. Fortune favors me. My brave fellows shall give no quarter. We shall pounce upon them at midnight, and, to-morrow, the rising sun shall behold a squadron of corpses. But, mother, I am completely fagged out. Do you, therefore, get me a bite, and I will go to bed."

Maggie heard the old woman rise and bustle about the room, preparing a night repast for her criminal son.

The information imparted by son to mother sent a nameless and indescribable chill to her heart. That her brave lover and his dragoons were in imminent danger was very manifest, and she resolved to make a desperate effort to save them, and, by doing so, save herself, as well, from an unavoidable doom. She knew where the "Giant Spur" towered toward heaven. The road thither was long, but she knew every foot of it, and, well seated upon the back of a good horse, the distance would seem but a mile.

Presently the Tory finished his repast, and retired to a small chamber. A moment thereafter his mother extinguished the light, and followed his example.

Now for escape.

The door was locked within, and strongly bolted without.

Escape in that direction was impossible.

Maggie looked at the prostrate negress, and found her wrapped in deep slumber.

In one corner of the room lay the broken stock of a musket, still a cumbersome thing.

The girl neared it by degrees, and, at last, clutched it with an inaudible ejaculation of joy. Then, with grimalkin steps, she approached the sleeping guard.

With the aid of the broken stock, she succeeded, after an hour's labor, in removing the fastenings, and gently removed the stock.

Stepping to the floor, she drew a pistol from Bess' bosom, descended to the ground, and glided toward the stable.

Two steeds, one of which was saddled and bridled, occupied the stalls. She led forth the one particularized; mounted him with agility, and galloped off in the moonlight.

Her attention then flitted to the window, which looked upon a sled in the rear of the hut. Discovering that her station prevented her from working to advantage, she rolled the negress beneath the window, and, mounting her, worked for life.

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Presently she struck the road terminating at the foot of the "Giant Spur," and urged the animal into a faster gait.

On, on she went, congratulating herself upon her escape; but her joy soon came to an abrupt pause.

The sound of approaching hoofs fell, with doubtful distinctness, upon her ears, and, looking back, she beheld a single horseman rapidly nearing her! He was hatless and coatless; but a polished blade glittered in the moonlight.

"They captured you did they?"

"Yes, they caught me, did they?" was the reply; "and when you kin say as how you fell into the group of Bill Redpath's gang, an' live to tell it—why, then you 'll hev the right to talk."

"Well, well, Dave, I didn't mean to defend the scoundrels," I replied. "But tell us how it was they came to gobble you, and you succeeded in getting away."

"I didn't get away a-tall; they got away,

but I did, and I'm a-doin' it fast, though I didn't know it."

"It wur the fifth day, es nigh es I could calkerle, when the head imp uv 'em all,

Bill Redpath, kem in. He'd been out spyin' in a train, I heard him say, an' he'd brought

a kag uv sperrits he hed stole sumwhar.

I dunno how it war, but, when I heard him tell 'em 'bout them sperrits, I kinder fel es it war a-goin' to hev somethin' to do wi' my case. The idee kin like a flesh—that's another word fur it, but—"

"Inspiration," I suggested.

"That's it, youngster—inspiration—an' ever."

"The way them cutthroats walked into them sperrits war a caution to snakes. It must a' been a hefty kag, fur they kep' it up all that day, n'st' part uv the night, an' by the time they hed begun to git cantankrous.

"Sez I to myself, thar'll be Ole Nick to

pay 'mong them chaps afore long, jess es

they come to m' self."

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